

THE STUDENT BIBLE

Short Points:

- 1) Stop going on social media sites (Facebook, Reddit, Twitter, etc). You aren't going learn, academically, from them.
- 2) Stop partying every night. There will always be another party.
- 3) Avoid video games. They destroy lives the same way alcoholism does.
- 4) Discipline. There isn't any trick for making yourself do work and liking it. Just sit down and do it. Stop looking for a way out of it, start doing it.
- 5) Plan enjoyment. Thinking "I'll go have fun on Saturday night and Sunday" can make Thursday night studying much more productive.

You're in college now. Luck has nothing to do with succeeding. Don't convince yourself it does. Winning comes from preparing, not at the last minute, but from the very beginning.

Focus:

When you lose focus, you have two choices: take a break, or push harder. Always start with trying harder to focus. Cut off all distractions, put on some blinders if you have to. Pick music you will enjoy but won't distract you (in order to block out other noises). Keep a snack and water nearby.

If you're really just out of it, take a break. You will waste time if you don't. Take a short break: set an alarm for your break and just relax, play a game, do whatever you want to get the distractions out of you, and your focus back to what is important. Use an alarm clock or a timer to make sure you aren't overdoing a break.

Set goals as well. I know everyone says this, but it's only because it is useful. Short term goals such as: "Finish studying this chapter before dinner" or "complete report 2 days before it's due" really helps in setting deadlines and getting things done.

Use sticky notes or some other way to keep you on top of your goals. When things aren't written down, it's much easier to blow them off.

Motivational Story as told by a random person from the Internet:

"Hey, I'm just a guy who had to learn all of life's lessons the hard way. I flunked out of school (did not think that would ever happen to me), went to trade school (did not do extremely well there either, due to lack of self-discipline). I worked terrible, low-paying jobs in my trade (the second job was pretty good, but it was a dead end job nonetheless). At the age of 29 I decided to go back to college and settle all of the woulda-coulda-shouldas that had piled up in my head for so many years and work to my potential. I was taking about 15 credits (5 courses) per semester while working a full-time job (40 hrs/wk). This forced me to use my time wisely and apply myself. I would pull all-nighters to get projects/papers done, go to work, go to class,

go home, do my school work. THEN go to bed. It made me a better person and gave me something to be proud of. I wish you all the best. Learn from my experience and don't be a bitter person working terrible jobs for terrible pay while everyone else you knew went to school, graduated from a university and has more money than I'll ever know what to do with."

Daily Routine:

1. Make yourself go to class everyday. Get the loudest alarm clock you can find and put it somewhere that you physically have to get out of bed to get it. Drink something caffeinated as soon as you step out of bed, and then get a shower. This will assure that you are awake enough to go to class.

2. When you go to class, sit in the FRONT ROW. This will assure that you can pay attention (also professors are more likely to cut a break to students that they know/recognize, especially if they see you in the front row everyday and think that you're trying hard).

3. Do the assigned readings for the class BEFORE you go to the class. Even if you are just skimming the material, by reviewing it before the professor covers it in class, you can iron out details that you didn't understand during your initial reading.

4. RE-READ the assigned readings right after class. This will reaffirm what you read earlier and what you learned in class and will ensure that you thoroughly understand the material. You will be surprised at how much you learned from going to class, which tends to cover some of the more subtle points in the reading.

5. When you do your assigned readings for class, take notes. When the professor goes over the readings in class, raise your hand. Ask questions for more in depth understanding of the reading, or raise your hand to answer his questions about the reading. You will appear (and actually be) knowledgeable about the subject material and most likely impress your professor as a "serious scholar" with a genuine interest in the subject material.

6. Make it a point every once in a while to talk to the professor after class (or at office hours) to ask a question about something from the lecture or the reading. Again, this will build a relationship with the professor and will assure that you will get a break if you are not the cusp (grade-wise), because he/she KNOWS YOU.

7. Make a study sheet for exams and go over it as much as possible (formulas, facts, etc). Also DO ALL THE PRACTICE TESTS, these will generally be geared to the types of questions which will be presented on the exam.

8. Do ALL THE HOMEWORK (even if its not collected or checked). This will build your mastery of the subject material and give you better exam results.

Goals & Rewards:

It's important to keep in mind your end goal: graduating and getting a good-paying job you enjoy, or going to graduate school to pursue higher education in a field you enjoy. The economy isn't at its best and jobs are going to the people with the best grades/projects/awards. This information is what will get you through those long nights of studying, term papers, homework etc. As my pops always told me "keep your eyes on the prize." Hang some motivational stuff at workstation and in your room to keep you focused. Surround yourself with supportive people, avoid people with negative, defeatists' attitudes, and avoid people who will try to distract you or try and put you off task. As someone said, there will be plenty of parties after your college experience. If you need to unwind, take a walk or save parties for the weekends. At the end of the day, you need to reward yourself with some fun (all work and no play makes jack a dull boy), but save it for AFTER you get your work done. Study hard. People in your field KNOW when they are dealing with someone who coasted and BS'ed their way through school. Soak up the knowledge being offered to you like you are a porous sponge, THAT is what you are there for. Many people believe that when they go to college that it's a 4-year long party, and many people also learn out the hard way that it's not. Don't be that person that learns the hard way. That's only in the movies, not in real life. In real life college is a 4-year learning experience and graduating is the end goal. GO FOR IT! If you need something to make it "real" to you, go visit some places where people in your field do work. See how they live. See what the rewards are. Also keep in mind all of the people in your family (brothers, sisters, parents, grandparents etc) who would have killed for the opportunities that are presented to you.

Asking Questions:

One of the most important things in college (more so in life) is to ASK QUESTIONS.

If you don't know or understand something, then ASK. I cannot stress this enough. Remember, the job of the professor is to make sure you understand what he is teaching. Don't just sit there and pretend to understand, that is a recipe for disaster especially if it's content that builds concepts one on top of the other. If you get lost early and don't ask for clarification, you are setting yourself up for failure. It's like building a skyscraper on a mud foundation. ASK ASK ASK, and then some more. Make sure you understand everything. If you don't know, then there are probably 4 to 5 other people who also don't know, and they are doing the same thing as you. Don't be too embarrassed to ask questions. You may feel foolish for the moment, but like I said, you aren't going to be the only one. You may even have people come up to you after class and tell you "I'm glad you asked the professor about x because I had no clue either, I was just too embarrassed to ask because I thought everyone else understood it." <-- Someone actually said this to me. I figure it like this, you're paying for college, you might as well get your money's worth. If the waiter forgets your soup or side dish, you're going to ask for it, right? If you are paying someone to teach you and you don't understand, you are paying for knowledge you didn't get. Treat the service as you would goods that you paid for but never got.

Balance & Smarts:

Don't ignore your health. Make sure you are physically and mentally OK. Get screened for anxiety/depression/ADD/ADHD and get on meds if you need to. Be sure to eat right and get exercise. I have been doing great at my university but have not been able to maintain proper physical health. I recently started making time to exercise again, and I feel better than I ever have. Life is all about balance.

Claude Olney, who made a ton of money selling his education package "When There's a Will, There's an A" said, "There's a difference between working hard and working smart. Give one man an axe and another a crowbar and tell them to cut down a tree. No one will deny that the guy with the crowbar is working hard, but the guy with the axe is working smart."

Effort:

When you're working hard, it's late, and you're tired and unfocused, remember this... "In five years, I won't remember that I didn't get much sleep that one night, I will remember, however, the "A" that I earned for putting in that effort."

Side note: If you are ever at the point where it's 4AM and you haven't finished studying for your exam which is at 9AM, and you think that an extra hour or so will help you for the exam, more often than not, it's better to be well rested before the exam than to put in an extra hour or two into studying.

If you put in effort into a class, professors are much more likely to write you a letter of recommendation if you ask for one.

Final Words:

Pay it forward. Help someone who is in the same mess. I may not know who you are reading this, and you may not know who I am, but pass on this knowledge and let's help everyone secure a better future for themselves. Don't let negative people bring you down or distract you, EVER. This is your journey and if you want to succeed, then forget anything that will take you away from your success. Chances are these people are miserable with their own failures, and as the saying goes "misery loves company."

Good luck with everything you choose to pursue in life, it's all there for the taking if you reach out and take it.